

September is Preparedness Month in Iowa

DES MOINES – Governor Terry E. Branstad has proclaimed September as Preparedness Month in Iowa.

“This past summer’s severe weather and flooding are a reminder that disasters can, and do, happen in our state and that is why I have proclaimed September as Preparedness Month in Iowa,” said Branstad. “I am asking Iowans to take steps now to prepare themselves and their families for any emergency.”

During September all Iowans are urged to become more prepared by taking three simple steps:

Step 1: Build a kit. During an emergency, there are items you and your family will need. Build an emergency supply kit and keep it in a place where it will be easy to grab if you need to quickly leave your home.

Step 2: Make a plan. You and your family may not be together when an emergency happens, so knowing what to do, where you will go, and how to get in touch with each other is important.

Step 3: Be aware. When bad weather is in the forecast, pay attention to the news, sign up for alerts for your mobile phone, and use your NOAA weather radio to receive weather and other emergency alerts.

Helping older Iowans prepare

It’s important to plan for those with special needs, such as the older members of your family and community.

“It can be as simple as talking to older loved ones and neighbors about what they would do if a tornado or flood impacted their community,” said Donna Harvey, director of the Iowa Department on Aging (IDA). “Do they know where they would go to shelter or how they would find transportation if they needed to evacuate their home?”

The three simple preparedness steps are important, and the IDA and Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management also encourage older Iowans to take some special measures to ensure they are ready for emergencies, such as:

- Creating a support network. Think about the assistance you would need during a disaster and enlist family and friends who can help.
- Including medications in your emergency supply kit and keeping a copy of your prescriptions in your kit.

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- If using medical equipment that requires electricity, talking to your doctor or medical equipment supplier about what you would do if you lost power.

For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' [Administration on Aging website](#).

Not only is September Preparedness Month, but Sept. 7 is Grandparents Day, a perfect opportunity to give grandparents the gift of preparedness.

In addition to reaching out to older family members and neighbors to help them with their emergency planning, other appropriate gifts for grandparents, and all older Iowans, are emergency kits and weather radios.

Iowa's Preparedness Month is held in conjunction with National Preparedness Month, which was created by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in an effort to educate the public on how to prepare for emergencies and disasters.

For more information on Preparedness Month and the three simple steps that all Iowans can take to preparedness, visit the [Ready Iowa website](#).

The Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management leads, coordinates and supports homeland security and emergency management functions in order to establish sustainable communities and ensure economic opportunities for Iowa and its citizens.

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